

A THEORETICAL INTERLUDE

associates felt the need of making their position quite dear to the comrades around the world in order to secure their support. Since the Comintern had not met for several years, it was thought advisable in Moscow to call a new Congress and expound the accepted views before it. Another reason for review and codification was that the execution of the early principles in colonial and semicolonial countries had given Moscow a wealth of experience and had created some doubts on points of the early program. The debate on Iran that raged among Soviet theorists after Reza Khan's coup was a good example of uncertainty in meeting concrete problems in the Middle East. What was needed was a clear-cut program that would contain not only the principles but also the tactics to be followed in various areas. Responsible agents of the Comintern should no longer be left in the dark as to which directives should be followed. Finally there was still another reason, perhaps more urgent than the first two: it was the fear, almost the panic, in Moscow in 1927-1928 that Russia was threatened with immediate armed intervention by capitalistic countries. History gave the lie to these apprehensions, but at that time the possibility of a concerted armed attack against the Socialist Fatherland was taken seriously by Soviet leaders. Hence arose the necessity of strengthening Communist forces all over the world and of issuing to them clear-cut instructions as to how to behave in case of emergency. A revolt in the colonies of capitalistic countries would, in such a case, be of inestimable defensive value to the Soviet Union by creating serious disorders in the enemy's rear. A careful elaboration of tactics in colonies and semicolonies

was, then, of capital importance. The task of doing it fell upon the long-delayed Sixth Congress.

THE SIXTH CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN

The Sixth Congress of the Communist International was called to Moscow in the midsummer of 1928 and sat there till almost the end of the year. Most of the Communist parties in the world sent their delegations, often headed by their top leaders. The East, including the Middle East, was well represented. The atmosphere of the Congress was marked by enthusiasm for Soviet internal achievement; the delegates worked generally in a serious mood and did not spare their